

REMARKS

The applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough examination of the application and request reexamination and reconsideration of the application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks. The applicants also appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 4 and 5 are allowable. The applicants have added new claim 27 which is claim 4 written in independent form to take advantage of the Examiner's indication of allowability.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 6, 9, 11-14, 24 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,420,008 to *Lewis et al.* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,785,144 to *Akram*, and claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Lewis* in view of *Akram* as applied above, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,774,434 to *Bennion*.

Claim 1 of the subject application as amended is directed to an electrically active textile article comprising fabric, a circuit including traces and pads on a flexible substrate secured to the fabric, and at least one electronic component populating the circuit. Independent claims 24 and 26 also include the feature of a circuit including traces and pads on a flexible substrate.

Lewis is directed to a display sticker with an integral flasher circuit and power source. A thin flexible sheet 12 has a printed circuit board 14 adhesively affixed to its back surface 16. The front surface of the sticker may have printed thereon a product or company name, or other advertising indicia. The sticker preferably includes a pre-punched hole 24 through the flexible sheet 12 for an LED 26. The front surface of the circuit board is flat and free of components except for the LED. *See* Col. 3, lines 21-38 of *Lewis*. The LED attracts the attention of a desired observer to the sticker.

The Examiner alleges that *Lewis* discloses all of the elements of the applicants' claimed invention except for a circuit including traces and pads on a substrate, and further alleges that it would have been obvious to construct the circuit with traces and pads as suggested by *Akram* since these traces and pads are commonly used in printed circuit boards to interconnect various electronic components.

The applicants submit that *Lewis* fails to disclose a circuit on a flexible substrate as claimed by the applicant. The Examiner alleges that circuit 46 of *Lewis* is on a flexible substrate 14. However, the Examiner's interpretation of *Lewis* is incorrect in this regard. *Lewis* discloses that printed circuit board 14 is adhesively affixed to a thin flexible sheet 12; *Lewis* does not disclose that the printed circuit board itself is flexible as claimed by the applicants. *Lewis* describes the circuit board in great detail at Col. 3, lines 46-61, and fails to disclose that the circuit board is flexible. Nowhere does *Lewis* disclose, teach or suggest that printed circuit board 14 is flexible.

Accordingly, as *Lewis* fails to disclose a circuit on a flexible substrate as claimed by the applicants, independent claims 1, 24 and 26, and their respective dependent claims, are patentable over *Lewis*.

Additionally, independent claims 24 and 26 include the feature of a covering over the flex circuit and the at least one electronic component. The Examiner refers to element 12 of *Lewis* in alleging that *Lewis* discloses such a covering.

Lewis discloses a thin flexible sheet 12 which has a printed circuit board adhesively affixed to its back surface. Flexible sheet 12 includes a hole 24 through the flexible sheet for LED 26 such that LED 26 protrudes through hole 24 when the circuit board is affixed to sheet 12. See Col. 3, lines 20-38 and Fig. 1 of *Lewis*. As the LED of *Lewis* protrudes through the sheet 12, the sheet 12 is not a covering over the electronic component as claimed by the

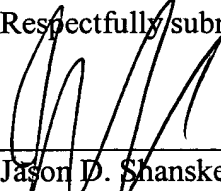
applicants. Simply put, sheet 12 fails to cover the electronic component of *Lewis* as claimed by the applicants.

Accordingly, as *Lewis* fails to disclose a covering over the flex circuit and the at least one electronic component as claimed by the applicants, independent claims 24 and 26 are patentable for at least this additional reason.

Each of the Examiner's rejections has been addressed or traversed. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is respectfully requested.

If for any reason this Response is found to be incomplete, or if at any time it appears that a telephone conference with counsel would help advance prosecution, please telephone the undersigned or his associates, collect in Waltham, Massachusetts, at (781) 890-5678.

Respectfully submitted,



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